



My Working Day



My Working Day as a: Community Safety Officer (Public Transport)

Organisation: Merseytravel

Type of organisation: Public Body - (PTE/A)

Subject of study: English Literature

Job title: Travel Safe Policy Officer

Job type: Community Safety

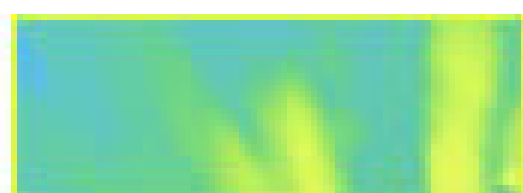
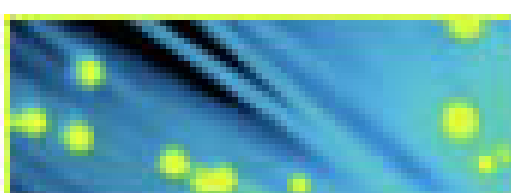
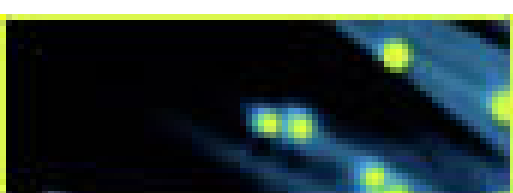
In which country are you currently working?: UK

What does your job involve?:

I manage Travel Safe, an initiative and team tasked with addressing issues of crime and disorder on public transport across the whole of Merseyside. My work covers some 165 million bus and 35 million rail journeys each year. I am responsible for overseeing our liaison with Merseyside Police, British Transport Police and both rail and bus operators. The design of an intelligence system to analyse and map instances of disorder on the network has been crucial to this role and in promoting the programme. I manage a budget in excess of £2.5 million a large part of which supports the installation of CCTV on buses. A key responsibility is managing new initiatives and ideas for tackling entrenched problems such as criminal damage at shelters.

My typical day:

My typical day starts at around 8am although earlier if there is a police operation that I want to see. The morning starts with answering email and the post before moving on to at least one meeting. This would typically be to manage one of the ongoing projects - shelter damage - CCTV - Secure Stations etc. I chair most of these meetings and the real skill required is the ability to understand the motivation of different stakeholders and move everyone toward a common goal. The afternoon will generally consist of more email - and either meetings or site visits. Report writing and project planning can also consume considerable amounts of time. My day will typically finish between 5 and 6 pm.



Three things that I like about my job:

(1): There is a high level of independence - perhaps more so than elsewhere in local government roles.

(2): A strong sense of making a valuable contribution to the aims of the organisation and to the benefit of the public.

(3): Transforming ideas into reality - perhaps not the reality I originally imagined but still an improvement on what went before.

Three things that I'm not quite so keen on:

(1): Bureaucracy - things can move very slowly sometimes.

(2): Managing conflicts between stakeholders - artificial conflicts can drain away lots of energy and time that could be better spent.

(3): Relatively low pay compared to private sector - although job security is better.

Key points in my career development to date:

The key point in my career development to date was winning Beacon Status Award for a project with a different local authority. This established my credentials to deliver in much the same way as my qualifications vouched for my intelligence.

What I wish I'd known when I was a student:

My qualifications in English are not specific to my work environment and fail to deliver some of the financial rewards of more focused degrees. While I loved my course I might have been better advised to look at something with a specific career at the end of it - Law for example. You need to work at identifying what you love to do and a course that will lead to a job that matches that as closely as possible.

Tips or advice for those looking for jobs:

Figure out what makes you happy - helping people - money - challenges - responsibility etc and try to find something that will meet that need.

It is always easier to move to a different job once you are employed so if you are still waiting for the ideal to come along then it can be ok to take something in the meantime - but don't settle!

